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ABSTRACT

Observations of schools and the economies of various countries and regions (including the Eastern and Western Europe, Scandinavia, and the United States) suggest that the following generally accepted principles may be called hoaxes: (1) great numbers of new emerging jobs of the future will require much higher skill levels for workers; (2) increasing educational levels and training will create jobs; and (3) university research is generally of high quality and important. The reality is that, throughout the world (including in Wisconsin), the biggest areas of job growth are in the service and sales sectors. Most of these jobs require short-term or moderate-length training or experience rather than long-term training. Furthermore, there is no evidence that increasing educational levels or training can create jobs. Upgrading education and increasing people's educational levels are beneficial. The problem is on the demand side (creating living wage jobs) rather than on the supply side (education and training of workers). The ultimate paradox in education in the United States is that while some school reformers are calling for changes in secondary schools to follow European models, the European countries are enacting major reforms to make their schools more similar to U.S. schools. (MN)

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Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin



Report 10 1997

The Education & Financial Systems of the World & the Big Con Part One- World Education & Education Reform in Europe

Updated August 1999

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Introduction - The Educational and Financial Systems of the World

The educational and financial systems in a global economy are based on a number of hoaxes that are perpetuated by money and an academically disadvantaged media. Fortunately, in the case of education, the hoaxes in most instances do not do irresponsible harm to nations and people. Bashing teachers and schools unjustly may cause some discomfort for teachers and school administrators but most often does not cause irreparable harm. (Bashing teachers is a worldwide sport) Some school reforms are ineffective and of questionable value. The money used for these reforms could be much better used for lowering class sizes rather than paying chosen educators for administering reforms of little value. However hoaxes practiced in the financial world too often result in serious harm to nations and people.

The writer has visited, talked to people and observed schools and the economy in five visits abroad after participating in international conferences in education since 1987.

1. 1987, University of Twente Holland, European Forum Association of Institutional Research, Countries visited, Holland, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, East and West Germany including Berlin and Austria.
2. 1989, Trier University Germany, European Forum Association of Institutional Research, Countries visited, Germany, Luxembourg, England, Russia, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania.
3. 1992, Brussels Belgium, European Forum Association of Institutional Research, Schools visited in Brussels, Holland and Luneburg Germany.
4. 1996, Jerusalem Israel, International Conference on Technical Education JISTIC'96, Visited for eight days throughout Israel after the conference. Interviewed educators from Israel and Germany.
5. August 1997, Helsinki Finland, International Conference on Vocational Education IVETA'97. Countries and schools visited in Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

The Educational and Financial Systems of the World and the Big Con will be discussed in two parts, Part One World Education and School Reform in Europe and Part Two The Financial World. Sources of data and information are official documents from governmental units of countries such as the U.S., Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark or materials provided by individual schools visited in various countries and interviews of educators, students and individuals from many countries of the world. More than 2 hours of interviews were video taped in Scandinavia in 1997 and video interviews were also made in 1992 in Germany and Holland and in 1996 in Israel. European TV financial news was monitored over a five day period in September 1997.

Part One World Education and Education Reform in Europe

Big cons and scams are based on hoaxes. The biggest hoax of the 20th Century in education is "The high-tech, high skill and high pay jobs of the future." This hoax has been repeated over and over again all over the world for more than 30 years. With constant repetition by the business interests, educators and the media it is now accepted that great numbers of new emerging jobs of the future will be created in the future that require much higher skill levels for workers. Little evidence is presented or needs to be given since by repetition this hoax is now accepted as common knowledge.

Occasionally a large percentage increase is quoted for computer programmers to indicate a great expansion of high-tech emerging occupations. However the actual numbers of computer programmers or other high tech and high skill workers is never compared to the total workforce. In the State of Wisconsin, all of the engineers, scientists, technicians and computer related occupations in 60 specific job titles accounted for 81,570 jobs or 2.8% of the workforce in 1996 and are projected by the State of Wisconsin to total 104,780 or 3.5% of the 3.02 million 2006 workforce (Graph 1) The percentages for the U.S. would be similar and discussion with individuals from numerous industrialized countries and observation indicate that the percentages of high-tech workers in other industrialized countries might be similar to the U.S.

Reality is that the jobs of the world including Wisconsin that are increasing in the greatest numbers are those in the service occupations and retail and wholesale trade (Graph 2) In fact in Wisconsin the number and percentage of the workforce projected for retail and stock clerks and cashiers in 2006 190,020 or 6.3% of the workforce is much greater than the 60 high tech job titles. (Graph 1) Retail clerk is the number one job in the world in 1999 and will be forever.

The jobs of the world including the U.S. in the service occupations are largely jobs that require short term or moderate length training or experience not long-term training. (Graph 3)

A hoax related to the first hoax is "Increasing educational levels and training creates jobs." There is no evidence that increasing educational levels or training can create jobs. Increasing educational levels and training is of course always good because it increases the productivity of workers and a well educated citizenry is a great asset to society. Reality is that in a global economy jobs are moved from urban areas to rural areas from state to state and country to country for lower costs of labor, not because of an abundance of so called "skilled" labor. When labor costs get too high international companies just move their operations to a lower cost location. The hypocrisy and greed of these companies is incomprehensible. To perpetuate this hoax it is implied that any worker who uses new technologies like a computer or computer related equipment requires higher educational and work skills. Reality is that technology makes jobs simpler not more difficult. Word processing on a computer is much easier to do than typing on a typewriter. It is not necessary to study physics or higher math to operate a scanner or a high tech cash register. My elementary school grandchildren can learn to use computer software and a mouse without great difficulty.

Technology makes workers much more productive and reduces the number of workers required. A typical example would be the Scandia Corp. in Sweden, one of the world's

most renown and biggest manufacturer of trucks. In the 1980's a Scandia plant in Sweden produced 30,000 trucks with 8,500 workers. In 1997 they are producing 50,000 trucks with 5,500 workers. (Source: Scandia Corp. Sweden)

The biggest hoax in the world in education that has been perpetuated forever is "The quality and importance of university research." This hoax is the basis of a classic big con. Like all hoaxes including the two previous hoaxes the secret to establishing the hoax and accomplishing a successful big con is consistency. The learned tenured professors of the world who profit greatly by this continuing hoax keep repeating over and over again the importance and necessity of their research. The naive people of the world believe it.

Certainly there have been great discoveries in science and medicine and significant books and research done in all academic fields around the world for 2,000 years and in the U.S. in the 19th and 20th Centuries. In the 1990's the U.S. far surpasses Europe and the rest the world in Nobel prizes in science. (Graph 4) The U.S. as measured by articles published in academic and research journals also leads the world by a large margin in volume of research. Students from around the world come to U.S. universities because they are perceived to be the best in the world. (And they are, primarily because American high schools produce large numbers of bright, innovative and highly motivated students)

As a result there are good examples of university research and scholarship that are always used to justify the research of all university professors. For example the University of Wisconsin-Madison can give examples in agriculture, animal husbandry, science, educational psychology and numerous other areas where significant research has been accomplished. Whenever anyone challenges the rationale for professors teaching 6 hours or less a week for 34 weeks a year at salaries higher than K-12 teachers at any university in the world (professors in Europe on average teach less hours than in the U.S., often less than 6 hours) some exemplary examples of significant research are given. (The research might not really be of any significance but lay people do not understand the academic language and statistical procedures that are sometimes used to camouflage useless poor quality research)

Reality is that most university research papers are useless, are of little significance and are done to meet the requirements of the publish or perish policy cherished by university professors. Few people except colleagues and students (adding to their required bibliographies) ever read the so-called research. There is no public evaluation of research done by university professors. Universities including the UW-Madison, do not normally publish a listing of research by department and author completed in any given time period.

My experience and observation after attending five international conferences since 1987 and many in the U.S. over a period of 40+ years is that U.S. research is of much better quality than the rest of the world. There are two reasons for the superior U.S. research (1) The competitiveness of American society (2) The long tradition of European universities makes professors with tenure very job secure and unproductive. While U.S. University research may be better, the research done does not justify the ridiculously small teaching loads of American professors.

Vocational and technical educators in Europe have been in combat with universities for the last 40 years. In Europe, universities normally offer only academic courses in all academic areas, medicine, law and some technical programs such as engineering. Students seeking occupational education in business, engineering and other technical

areas attend Polytechnic schools or Technical Colleges. European Polytechnic schools and Technical Colleges like the Fachhochschule's in Germany have been producing many more engineers than the universities. However traditionally polytechnic's and technical schools were not given the prestige of the university and teachers in these schools were considered to have lower status than university professors. The differences between universities and other higher education schools was length of programs (usually 3 years rather than 4 or more years at the universities) and research activities.

Reform of higher education in Europe has resulted in the following changes in the 1990's:

1. Polytechnic's and Technical Colleges are now called universities.
2. Programs of study have been extended to 4 or more years at all schools offering higher education for almost all occupational or technical programs, even programs in Tourism and Food Service (The less prestigious term vocational is not used, like the U.S.)
3. Some research is done at technical institutions. These changes have not resulted in raising the image of technical schools to that of the university. A major research project being undertaken with the collaboration of most of the Western European countries is to study methods to raise the image and perception of technical education in European higher education.

A major reform of education in Europe has been the upgrading and extension of the years of education of vocational students ages 16 to 19. Most commonly in Europe formal education at the elementary level is nine years and ends at age 16. Historically many students left school at age 16 or less and went to work or attended school part time and worked as a worker trainee on a job.

This pattern has changed because of the more than 10% unemployment rates in most of Europe. As a student in Sweden said, "it is almost impossible for a 16 year old to get a job". Most students are not able to work even during vacation periods because jobs are needed for older workers not attending school. As a result most 16 to 19 years of age now attend school and take either academic courses (with great emphasis on multiple languages) and/or vocational courses.

The major reform in most of Europe has been the combining of academic high schools called Gymnasiums and Vocational schools into comprehensive schools called "higher" secondary Gymnasiums. Prior to the 1990's it was most common to have separate Gymnasiums and lower status Vocational schools. Vocational programs have been expanded to three years or more to give them more status and many vocational students are now going on to higher education at Technical colleges (universities). Gymnasium graduates in the past most often went to a traditional university but now many are going to Technical colleges (universities).

European higher secondary schools are becoming more like American high schools. The one big difference remaining is that athletic competition and extracurricular activities are most often through clubs and fraternal organizations separate from the schools.

The U.S. has had great increases in educational levels in the 20th Century and enormous increases since 1940. (Graph 5) The U.S. leads the world in college and university students enrollments and in percentages of the population with college degrees or more. But the U.S. public is constantly bombarded with another hoax, "U.S. educational systems and students are not keeping up with our international peers and are not competitive in a global economy." While education and educational systems in the

U.S. improve and are being emulated in Europe, school bashers use nefarious analysis of international testing results to criticize American Education. (Gerald W. Bracey, "Setting the Record Straight" 1997, Chapter 7 International Comparisons.)

The U.S. College Board and other supposedly knowledgeable organizations like the U.S. Department of Education misuse and misconstrue national test results like the SAT. (Sandia Report, Journal of Educational research, May/June 1993) Numerous books, reports and articles such as, Berliner and Biddle "The Manufactured Crisis" 1995, "Student Performance and the Changing American Family" December 1994 The Rand Corporation, show that contrary to public perception student performance in the U.S. continues to improve in the 1990's.

The upgrading of education and the increasing of educational levels of people in most countries of the world is good. The reasons it is good are 1) An educated citizenry provides the necessary population for a free and democratic society to survive. 2) It keeps young people out of the job market at times of high unemployment (High unemployment, more than 10%, is the norm in Europe with few exceptions) so that older workers can keep their jobs and provide for themselves and their families. 3) Expanding years of schooling and the number and types of schools creates significant numbers of living wage jobs for educators and also service jobs that provide services to schools. Salaries and services provided by government spending on schools creates more jobs through consumer spending. Government spending for education can produce \$4 of economic activity for every \$1 spent.

European countries and most countries of the world are expanding the number of years the average student attends school. Enrollment in higher education beyond higher secondary schools at traditional universities, polytechnic and technical universities is significantly increasing as it has in the U.S. for many years. The fabricated reason for increasing educational levels throughout the world is that it is necessary for the high skill jobs of the future. It is true that people without higher levels of education throughout the world have great difficulty in obtaining employment that pays a living wage. But this is because increasing educational levels increases the numbers of workers competing for better paying jobs and even desirable modest paying jobs. In the U.S. and the world college graduates are doing jobs once done well by non-college graduates or even high school dropouts.

The problem for the world and the U.S. is on the demand side (creating living wage jobs) not on the supply side (education and training of workers). Hypocritical and unscrupulous national and international employers move their operations based on the lowest cost for labor rather than on supply of so called "skilled" workers.

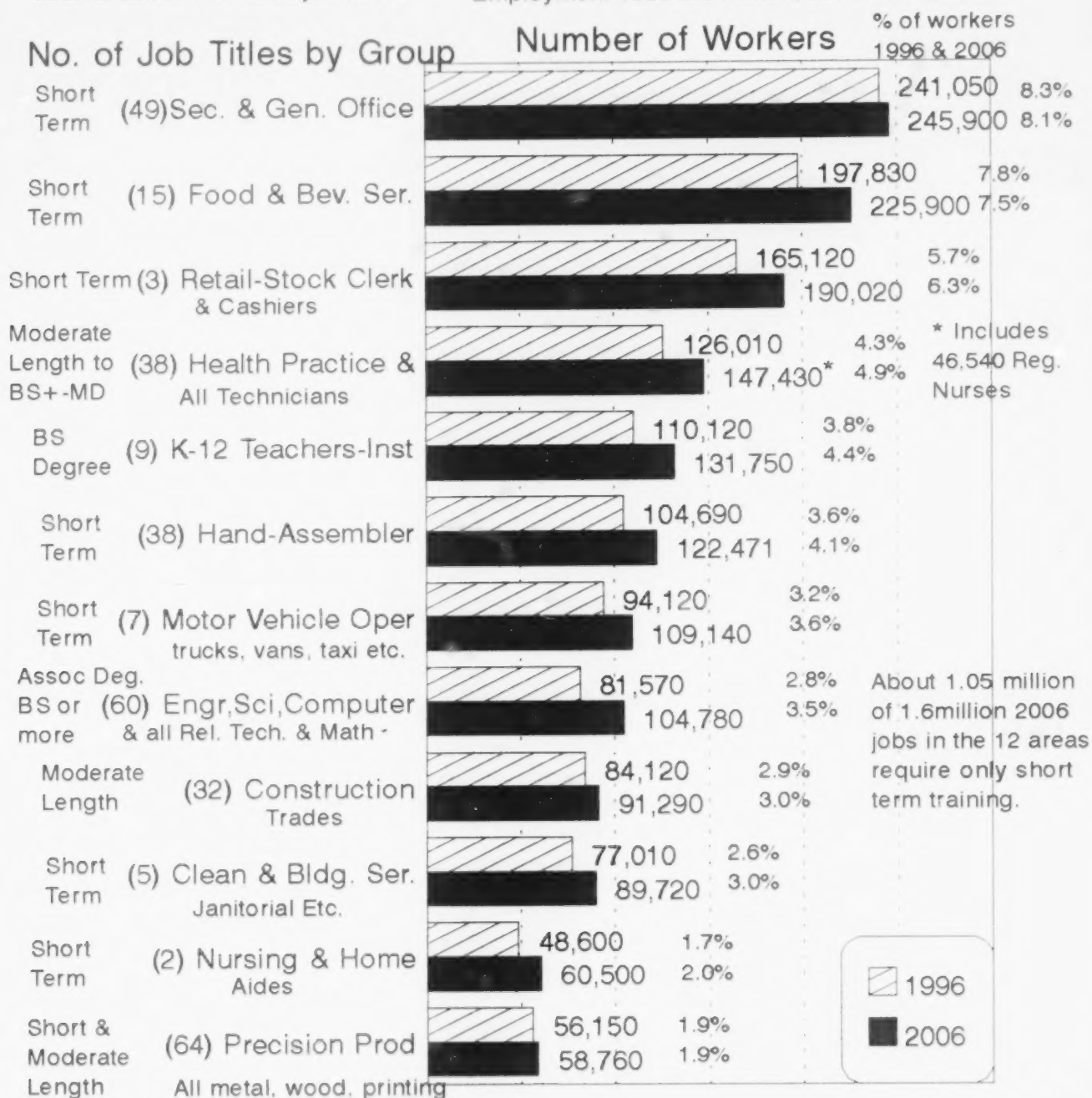
The ultimate paradox in education in the U.S. is that some school reformers in the U.S. are calling for changes in secondary schools to follow the German or European models while the Germans and other European countries are making major reforms that make them more similar to American schools. The world is a big con.

Dennis W. Redovich September 1997 Updated August 1999

Graph 1 Employment in the State of Wisconsin 1996 & 2006 in Selected Occupational Areas

The 12 Occupational Areas total 1.6 million workers in 2006, 53% of all workers. The 316 job titles is about 43% of all job titles.

Employment 1996 2.9 million, 2006 3.02 million

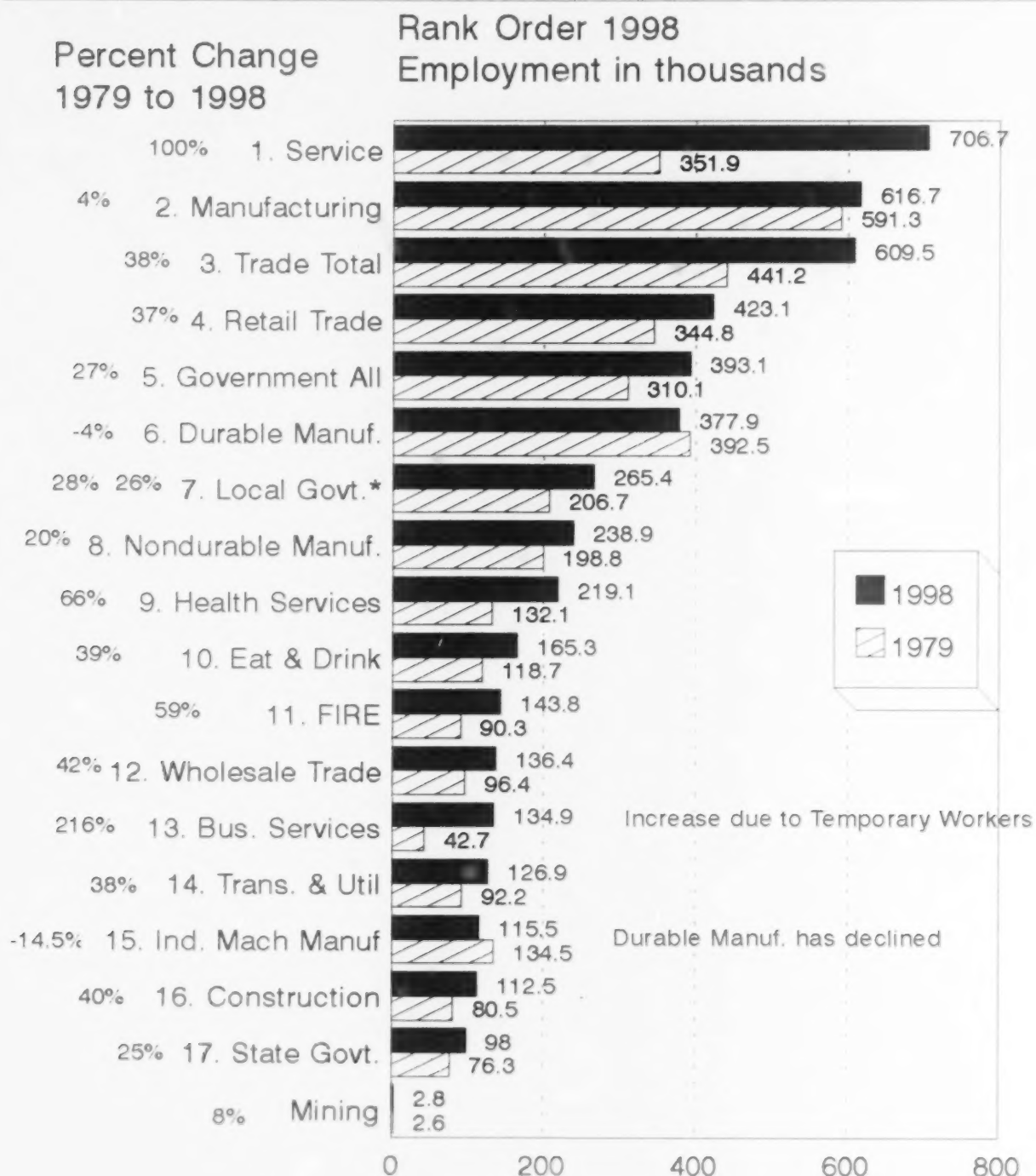


Number in parentheses indicates the number of job titles included in the group

Sources: Graph Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin June 1999

Data from Wisconsin DWD Projections 1996-2006, July 1998 Pages 53-72

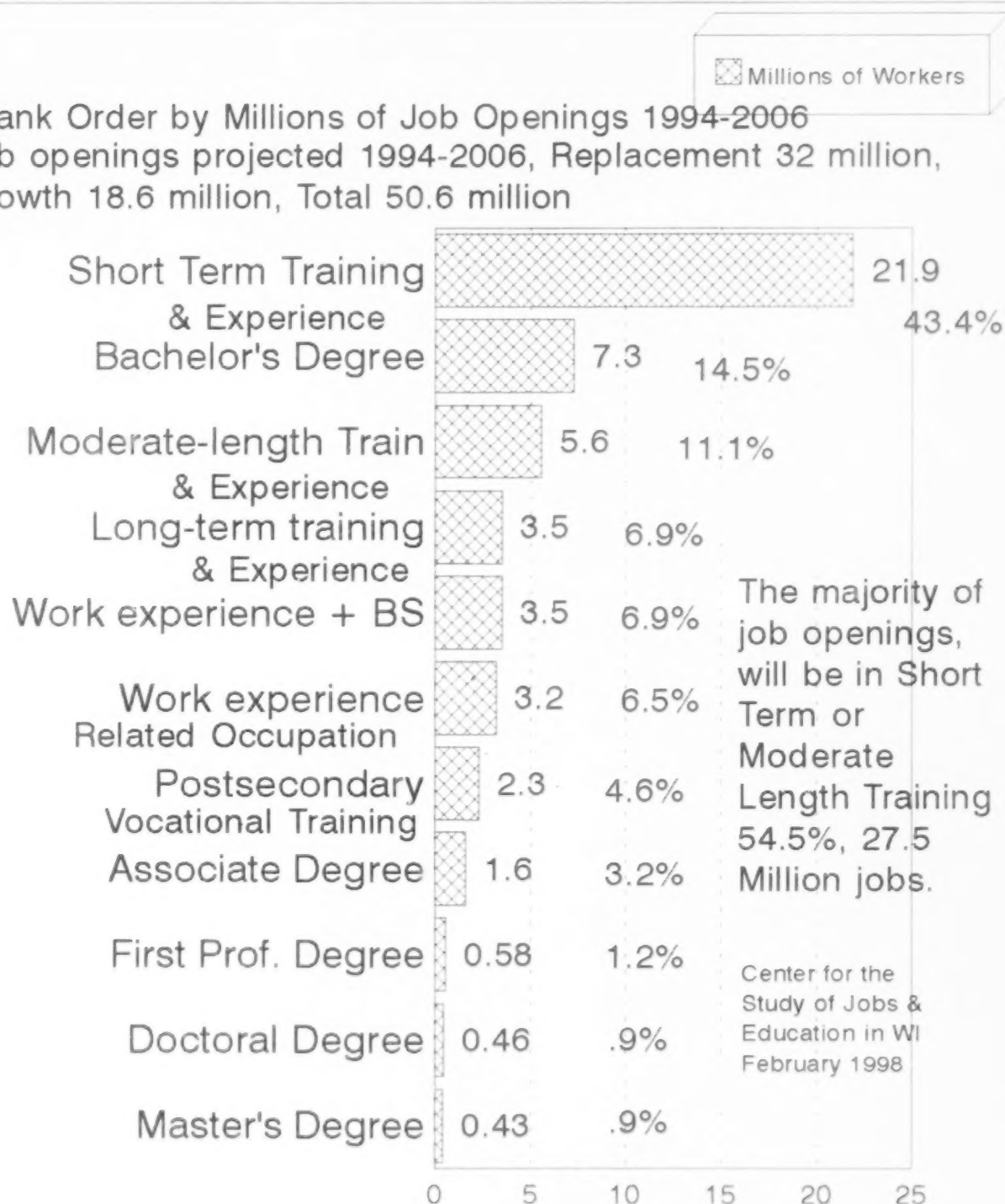
Graph 2 Employment by Selected Standard Industrial Classifications
1979 & 1998 Rank Order in Number of Employed in 1998



* Includes Indian operations since 1995

Source of data Wisconsin Dept. Workforce Development, Graph-Center for the Study of Jobs & Education in Wisconsin 7/99

Graph 3 Projected Total Job Openings by Level of Education and Training in the United States 1994-2006



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment & Job Openings 1994-2006

Graph 4 Nobel Prizes in Science

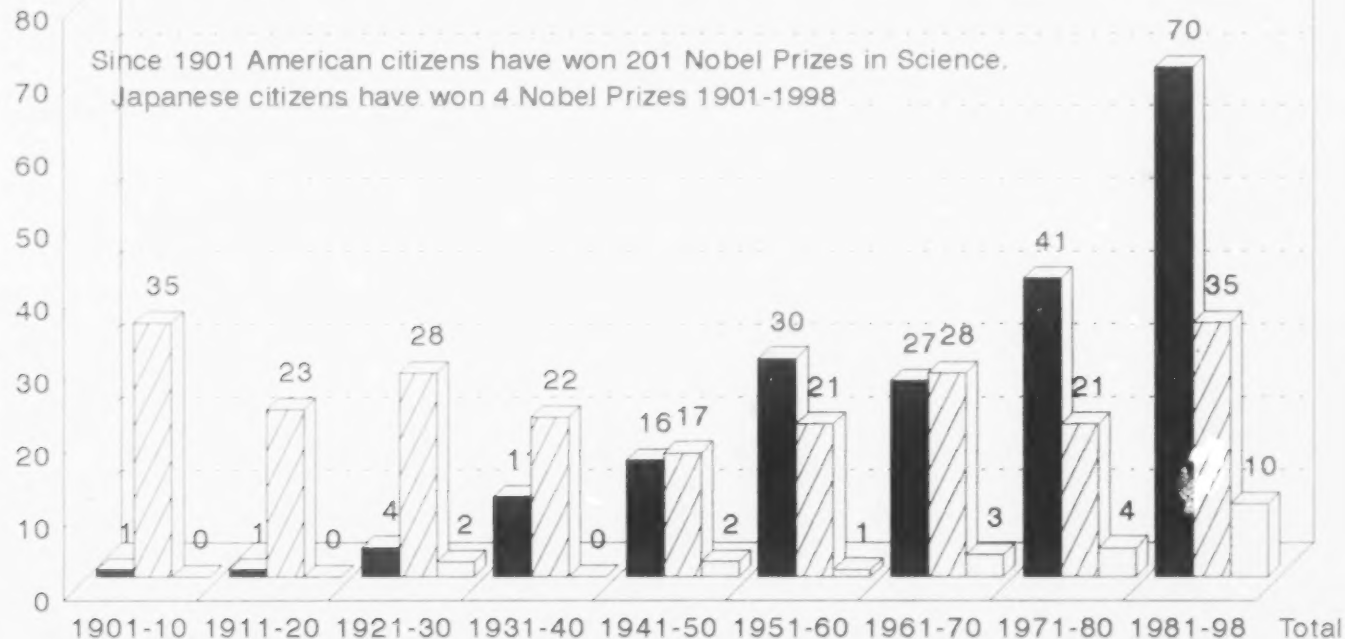
Physics, Chemistry & Physiology-Medicine 1901 to 1998

The United States leads the world in scientists and science education. The evidence is overwhelming.

Number

In October 1998 eight scientists working in the U.S. won Nobel Prizes in Science.

Six were U.S. citizens, one German and one British citizen won prizes in Physics.

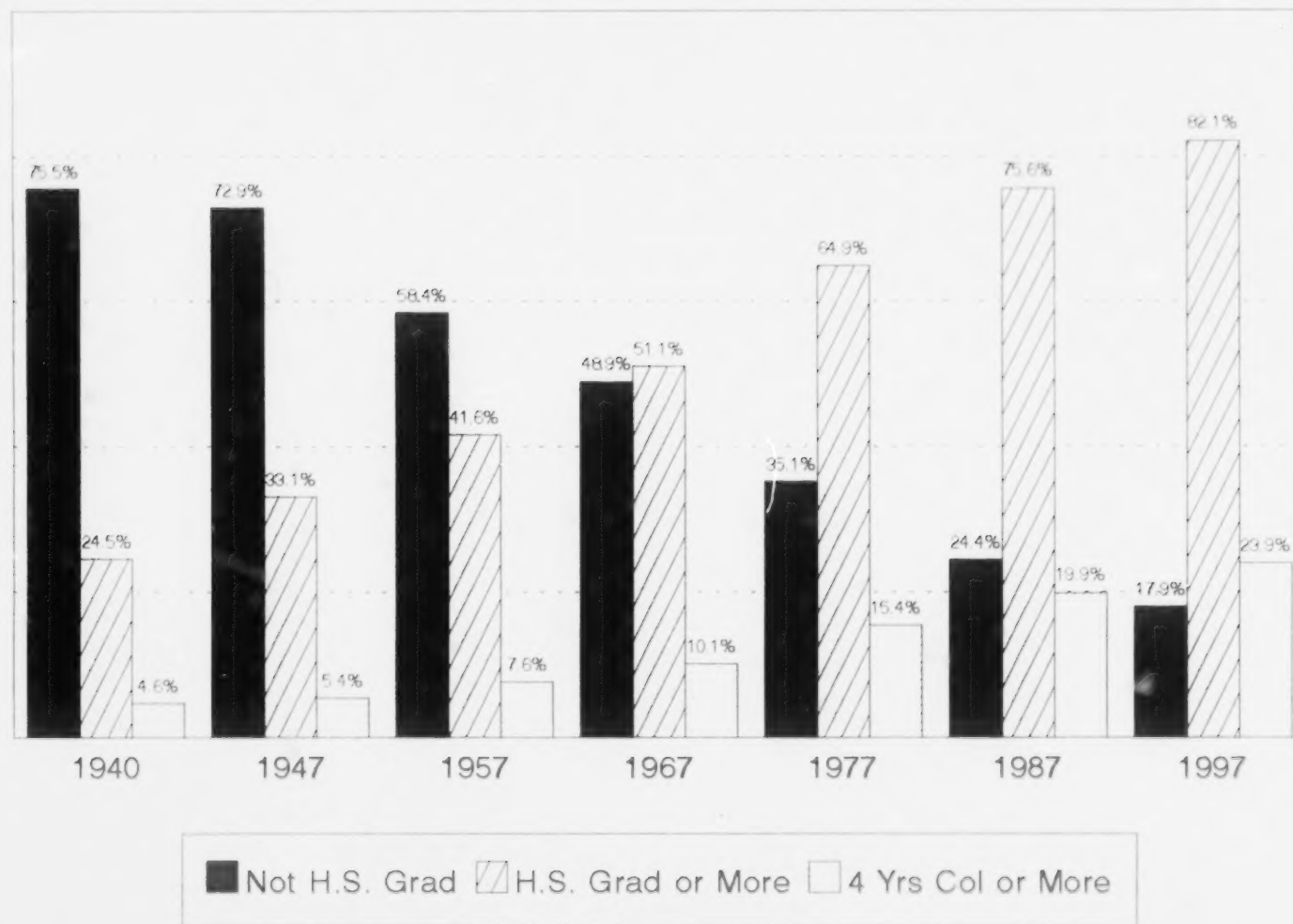


Americans *	1	1	4	11	16	30	27	41	70	201 44%
Europeans **	35	23	28	22	17	21	28	21	35	230 51%
All Others	0	0	2	0	2	1	3	4	10	22 5%
% Americans	3 %	4 %	12 %	33 %	46 %	58 %	47 %	62 %	61 %	
% Europeans	97 %	96 %	82 %	67 %	48 %	40 %	48 %	32 %	30 %	

*American citizens **European citizens-Native Europeans counted as Europeans for work done in Europe

Source: World of Winners, Gale Research, Milwaukee Journal/Sentinel, ERPD Consulting 10/98

Graph 5 Percent of Persons 25 Years and Over 1940 to 1997 Who Have Not Completed High School, Completed High School or College



SOURCE: U.S. Census Educational Attainment in the U.S. March 1993 & 1997

ERPD CONSULTING Greendale WI 8/98